

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claims 13 and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2001/0045175 to Ouchi et al. ("Ouchi") in view of JP 2000-191973 to Fukui 58nb ("Fukui"). The Examiner has also rejected claims 13 and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,063,834 to Kappelle et al. ("Kappelle") in view of Fukui. In addition, the Examiner has rejected claims 13, 16, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,888,287 to Brown et al. ("Brown") in view of Fukui. The Examiner has also rejected claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ouchi in view of Fukui, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,871,941 to Horii et al. ("Horii"). In addition, the Examiner has rejected claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kappelle in view of Fukui, and further in view of Horii.

The Examiner has objected to Claim 14 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, Examiner has indicated that Claim 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. As a result, Claim 13 has been amended to include all the limitations of Claim 14, and Claim 14 has been canceled.

In addition, Claims 2-6, 8-12, and 15-20 stand currently amended. Claims 1-12 stand previously withdrawn. Claims 1-20 are currently pending. The following remarks are considered by applicant to overcome each of the Examiner's outstanding rejections to current claims 13 and 15-20. An early Notice of Allowance is therefore requested.

I. AMENDMENTS AFTER FINAL ARE PROPERLY MADE

As sated above, Claim 13 is currently amended to include the language of Claim 14, and Claim 14 is canceled. In addition, Claims 2-6, 8-12, and 15-20 include only minor amendments to the form of the claims. As such, the claim amendments do not add any language not already present in one of the claims. These claims amendments were made to place the

claims in condition for allowance, as set forth in the current Office Action, and to place the claims in better form. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that the current claim amendments are proper After Final amendments under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests Examiner enter the current amendments as proper After Final amendments.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 13 AND 15-18 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(A) BASED ON VARIOUS REFERENCES

On pages 2-4 of the current Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 13 and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various references. These rejections are respectfully traversed and believed overcome in view of the following discussion.

Examiner has stated that Claim 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 13 (from which Claim 14 depends) has been currently amended to include the language of Claim 14. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that Claim 13 is now in allowable form, as are claims 15-18 because they are each ultimately dependent upon Claim 13. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner remove the rejections of claims 13 and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various references.

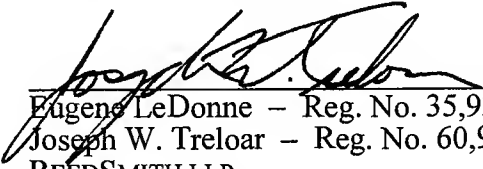
III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 19 AND 20 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(A)

On page 5 of the current Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various references. These rejections are respectfully traversed and believed overcome in view of the following discussion.

Claims 19 and 20 are each ultimately dependent from Claim 13. As Claim 13 is allowable, so must be claims 19 and 20. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner remove the rejections of Claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Based upon the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and its early allowance. Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorney would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact him at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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